

ONYX

I N F O R M E R

The Black Student View at NU

November, 1988

A New Executive Board in Place

Looking to a Unified Future

The votes are in, and the new Executive Board of Northeastern's Black Student Association are taking their places and preparing to take on the task set before them. The new Executive Board will serve for six months, and in that time they must lead the African-American Student Body on NU's campus into a unified future; for "where there is unity, there is strength."

Advisor, Ella Robinson, Dean of Minority Student Affairs is planning to work closely with the EBoard to insure that it runs smoothly. And it seems that the EBoard is already on the right track. Before taking over their offices, fully, the EBoard was trained, in the art of how to effectively run an organization such as NBSA by Dean Robinson and Shirelle Young.

The Executive Board is President, Kimberly Jones; Vice President, Denise Skipper; Vice President of Internal Affairs, Valencia Hughes; Vice President of Finance, Raynelle Swilling; Parliamentarian, Paul Lawrence; and Historian, Delicia Arnold.

Good Luck to All of You
The Onyx

Black People You Need to Stop and Come Together

By Valencia Hughes

Who You Callin' a Nigger?:
Who you lookin' at like that?
You Black as I am, and you
Still gonna try and put me
down
Man you better get out my face
With your pretty white ways
When you look in the mirror
Your skin still black as coal.
WAIT, wait a minute, let's
back up
For one you still standing in
my face
For two did you just call me a
nigger?
Who you callin' nigger fool?
O.K., O.K., it's time for me to
Hip you to what's happenin'
You see they have segregated
Do you know what that means
Mr. Intelligent?
Don't answer, I know you
don't

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(File Photo)

A New Student's Viewpoint of the Black Experience at NU

Racism or An Eye Opener

By Melanie Liptrot

As Black freshmen entering a large university in Boston, with the majority of the students and faculty being white, some students may find it difficult to get into the "Black-White" situation, when they are just trying to fit in. Being away from home, and having a great amount of freedom is a lot to deal with and the "Black-White" situation is just another addition to their many problems. Are we really slapping this situation in their faces or are we opening their eyes?

Robin Williams, a Black freshman at Northeastern University, majoring in accounting, was one of the many Black students who attended the meetings for minority students during freshman and transfer

students orientation week. When asked what she thought about the meetings she replied, "They scared me, it was so, Black this and Black that. For example, a representative of

week were conducted by Keith Motley, Dean of the African-American Institute, and Ella Robertson, Dean of Minority Student Affairs. Robin recalled Dean Motley commenting on

"They scared me, it was so, Black this and Black that. For example, a representative of the radio station (WRBB) got up to the mike and said that Northeastern may own the station, but we, as the Black people, run it, and we want to keep it as dark as possible."

the radio station (WRBB) got up to the mike and said that Northeastern may own the station, but we, as the Black people, run it, and we want to keep it as dark as possible."

Some of the meetings she attended during orientation

the fact that this was the "largest number of Black freshmen students to ever enter NU, which is good, but in this school you will always be the minority; always be the little person to them." She got the

Continue on page 3.

Editorial

My Perogative

By Dianna Simpson

(dedicated to the posse: you know who you are)

MY PEROGATIVE. This seems to be the theme song of the freshman class of 1993. We walked in bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to conquer Northeastern University, yet, a month and a half later, we seem to be a each other's throats. Arguments are erupting in the library (remember that?), the T.V. room in Speare Hall is being dubbed Madison Square Garden, and we're hating each other without establishing a reason. We're also moving from clique to clique to clique, trying to settle upon one, and then talking about the previous group we had associated ourselves with.

Is all of this really necessary? I mean, with so few black people in this institution, isn't there some other issue we can fight, like the plans to tear down the "Tute", instead of

each other? Think about it.

What about all of these judgement calls that are being made? Some of you out there, and Lord help you if you don't know who you are, have taken it upon yourselves to set a moral code for everyone else. Let me ask you a question: Who the HELL are you? If you don't have brown hair, blue eyes, and didn't die for the sins of your children, please, I repeat, please don't tell me how to live my life! Don't tell me who I can see, how many times I can see that person, and what I can do when I see that person. It's none of your business what I do with my life because I've gotten this far, unharmed, without you. Don't tell me what to do with my free time because I left mom and dad back in New York, and you weren't born with a white dress on, nor will you leave this lifetime with one on.

I don't mean to offend those of you who realize that this article is about you, but I'm just

fed up with all of this garbage that's going on. I have enough of my mind with school work without having to worry about what my friends(?) are saying about me. If you feel what you're saying is imperative, tell me, and not the next man. I appreciate your looking out for me, and I know you have my best interest at heart, but telling "Ms. Thing" instead of me isn't doing much good. I'll only interpret it as "he say, she say", and assume you're talking behind my back. And, if it is gossip, keep it to yourself, because it'll come right back to you. I think I speak for a lot of people on this campus.

I'm sure this hit home for a lot of people, and if it did, take a good look at yourself. Are you any better than the person standing next to you? Are you so good that you don't have to "repent your sins"? If so, keep doing what you're doing. If not, get yourself together, and stay out of other people's business. Everyone is tired of everyone else being "in the mix" and not knowing what's going on. People will do what they want to do. After all, it's their perogative...

Black Men and the Roles Black Women Play

By Felicia G. Smith

Time and time again Black women are faced with a dilemma...Whether or not to get involved with our Black men.

It is true time and time again they tend to hurt us; but have you ever stopped to think that something or someone hurt them in that same way before? They are hurting inside, but outside they wear their armor to protect themselves from the world which does not want them to survive. Nothing is an excuse, for they act as if they don't have a heart. Nothing is an excuse for the way we act or the way "we make each other

perform to win a kiss or caress."

The way Black women suffer and don't want to be hurt, Black men don't want to be hurt either. They pretend all is well, but no one knows the beating they took while they were out looking for the job paying \$5 an hour. If the world doesn't kill our men first, we will. The world is truly afraid of the Black man, not giving him one space to reach a hand to the next rung of the ladder; shoving "the white lady" (cocaine), Volvos and Beemers (BMW's) bought with "cash money" down his throat.

One thing Black women must understand is that it is



(File Photo)

hard enough for a Black man to survive without one more person trying to hold him down with immaturities and insecurities. We don't want to

News Briefs

Allegations of Racial Problems at Hyde Park High School

By Felicia G. Smith

MATTAPAN - Tempers of Black parents are still flaring after recent meetings with school committee members for Hyde Park High School to discuss alleged racial bias and student neglect by school principal Michael Donato.

"This is the only school in the city where there is a review of this type going on," said Ian Forman, public information officer for Boston schools in a recent telephone interview.

At a meeting with school committee members on October 26, parents called for the termination of Donato, who is currently under investigation. Three weeks ago students walked out of the predominantly Black school in support of Black English teacher Cynthia Swanigan after she made public allegations against Donato. Swanigan was not reached for comment because of professional teacher's meetings.

There are currently two investigations going on by a parent's group and by Boston school Superintendent Laval Wilson, said Forman. He said there will be no action taken against Donato until the review by Wilson is completed.

Donato was not available for comment under the advice of legal counsel.

continually spoil our men either because that accomplishes nothing.

But remember...They are our Black men.

ONYX

I N F O R M E R

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• Eye Opener

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impression that "I have to be better than them (the white students), they think I'm little, they think I'm nobody and so I have to show that I'm somebody. It's like they don't think anything of you, you're the minority; don't you think we know that? We don't need someone to tell us that. You know what you are before you come here."

Although Robin got a negative impression at the meetings she feels very comfortable knowing that she can go to the African-American Institute for help, but she feels you should not be pushed into a category marked "Black", because "we already know that we're Black."

When I asked Robin if she had attended Black Organizations Night or if she had attended any of the NBSA meetings, which are run by the students, she replied that the students are "the most stuck-up Black people I've ever seen in my life." She feels that she doesn't have to be in any kind of group because she's here to learn and she feels she can enjoy herself with whomever she chooses: white, Black, etc. She and her friends label the NBSA meetings as the Black Coalition Meetings."

Unfortunately, Robin has never been to an NBSA meeting and therefore her basis for labeling it as a "coalition meeting" can not be substantiated. True for some student the "Black-White" situation at NU is difficult to adjust to but before they make judgements, they should open their eyes and their minds and see what the Black students on campus are trying to do for ourselves, the community, and our people. The resources at the African-American Institute should be utilized by all Black students, while they are here because if we don't, they may not always be here. "...a people must face its history squarely in order to transcend it. ...No race can accomplish anything till its mind is awakened."

(*The Black Man's Burden*, 1965; *The Negroes Part In The South's Upbuilding*, 1904)

Do you have something to say about being a Black student at Northeastern?

Join the staff of ONYX and communicate.

New Faces at NU

By Valencia Hughes

Percy Hayles, the newest addition to the Office of Minority Student Affairs, was born May 21, 1957, in Cleveland, Ohio, to Lucille and Robert Hayles. Hayles received his formal education from The University of Akron. He received his undergraduate degree in Political Science, and his graduate degree in History. While at the university he also managed the Student Center.

Hayles chose to come to Boston because he felt it was time to "chart a new course; start anew." Upon coming to Boston, Hayles began working

as the Assistant Director of Denison House. He helped direct the afterschool program, to organize activities for the children, and direct the staff.

Dean Motley of the African-American Institute talked to Hayles about applying for the position opening in Minority Student Affairs, and now he is here, at Northeastern.

Hayles feels that his participation in the Black Student Government at Akron is partly why he is qualified for the position that he now holds, assistant to the Dean of Minority Student Affairs. He also feels that his qualification stems from the fact that he was most

recently in the same position as the college students that he now work with. He stated that he can "relate to a Black student's life at a white college." He wants to "make a significant contribution to the development of the Black student's life on this campus." part of Hayles duties are to run survival workshops and to plan workshops for Project Ujima Students.

Hayles is willing to talk with all students, he says to "please feel free to call on me."

Good Luck to Mr. Hayles, and may you have a long future at NU.

Creative Connections

By Rachel Lynn Evans

A young Black artist wanders down Leon Street wondering if there exist an environment where he can "peel away his fears" and exhibit his creative energies for all to enjoy. He continues to walk so enraptured in thought that his footsteps take him beyond the African-American Institute. (Funny how people often overlook vital resources). Suddenly, like some magnetic force he finds himself planted within the Institute. Here, he gazes upon a circle of colorful folks who are encouraging a shut-eyed Ebony child to cut the air with her body, free her-

self from inhibition and express herself. "Tell us your feelings, Now you're talking." This sight bewilders our young Black man. Perhaps it bewilders you too. No need to worry. This situation merely describes a typical scene at the Black Actors and Playwrights Workshop held at Northeastern University's African-American Institute's Cabral Center. B.A.P.W. director, Sean McGhee views the workshop as a common ground for Black artists. It promotes an atmosphere where creativity is shared and utilized while being enhanced with constructive criticism.

Why, a B.A.P.W. in this

Boston Community? McGhee and other actors within the community have become frustrated with mainstream theater's practice of casting Black actors merely by the color of their skin and not the quality of their acting. Too often mainstream theater denies non-traditional casting which involves casting Black actors in roles traditionally performed by white actors. This practice extends into the plight of the Black playwright.

Mainstream theater believes his plays will "not sell" therefore, artistically issues concerning the Black community are not addressed. These main-

Continued on page 4.

For all the young black men who think that nappy hair, flat nose, and thick lips are unattractive

We are destined to be together. I will follow you always;

Because I am your shadow.

Black brother,

I am the darker one who watches and yearns for you. I follow you in hopes

that you would see me,

but, you just overlook me.

Night after night, I do exactly what you do:

run my fingers through her blonde hair.

Kiss the lids of her blue eyes. I detest doing it with a passion, but what can I do?

I am only your shadow.

Black Brother,

I am the darker one who comes in the form of your shadow.

I follow you always. Never leaving, her deserting you. When they look at you with pure hatred in their blues, I look at you with pure unconditioned love. Because, I am your shadow. You are me. And, I am you.

Black Brother,

I am the darker one who looks at your choice of mate with horror, amazement, and enjoyment.

Somewhat happy that you've chose her over me. Yet hurt.

I am your shadow. She never love you the way I love you.

I was with you from birth! Yes, I was there. I am you. And, you are me. I am your shadow. I will follow you always.

Whether you like it or not.

.Nadia Stevens

• Come Together

Continued from page 1.

So I'm gonna tell you.
It means that you and your
Group of Cream-Filled
Negroes
Can be a dumb, stupid nigger,
too!
So before you open your
mouth
Think first
'bout who you callin' a nigger.

This poem was written during my sophomore year in high school, and it was written because the school that I attended was predominantly white. There I had to deal with Blacks that had forgotten or never learned that they were Black. I was treated like an outcast, by my own people. Now I am a sophomore in college, and nothing has changed. Black People, you need to stop, and come together.

When I entered Northeastern University I was ready to stand up with my Black brothers and sisters against this sea of white faces that we must face every day. I came to classes ready to join in with them, to learn with and from them. But it didn't come out that way. I knew my people on this campus had no reason

to reject me for they did not know me, but my Black brothers and sisters have shunned me just the same. I walked into rooms and smiled at my brothers and sisters and they turned from me. I went to sit near them and they drew closer to their white friends. I looked at them in bewilderment. "Are you Black or is that a mask you are wearing? Who's playing games," I wondered. Their actions seem to have said "nigger, please don't sit by me. I almost got whitey fooled, he almost think I'm white, too." And my actions said "who you callin' nigger, fool?"

You're only fooling yourselves. "Whitey" and me can see what you truly are. We are not the blind ones. I'll say it again, Black people You Need to Stop and Come Together!

When I'm walking across NU's campus there are certain Black brothers and sisters who look down their noses at me, and when they see me coming, they raise their noses high in the air in order not to see me and have to speak to me. And there are some even bolder brothers and sisters who will look me dead in the eyes and not speak. Where did we learn this behavior? It is unnecessary

and detrimental to our struggle for unity among ourselves.

If we are to have the unity and peace that our people have been crying for from Nat Turner, to W.E.B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington crying for from Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X to Louis Farakan and Jesse Jackson, then we must work for it, together. If we don't work for it, together, now who will our leaders of tomorrow be? I dare say we will have none.

Black people you need to stop; stop and think about, what we need to be about! Our people are being destroyed, not just far away in South Africa but right here in the corridors of these buildings on NU's campus, we are being torn apart and there is no need for it. If we don't get to know each other and accept each other good and bad, we won't be able to help each other. Don't become white-washed on the inside, 'cause your skin will forever scream BLACK!

We are not on neutral territory my Black brothers and sisters. This is a battlefield, don't you know? They are fighting hard to take from us everything our ancestors fought for. They are making plans to tear down the African-American

Institute. The one place we as a people on this campus can assemble and be one.

A new president is being chosen for this university, where will we stand in his eyes? If not together, we will not be seen, let alone heard.

This is their territory. We have chosen to infiltrate it, and they are hostile. We may be given an inch, but they are asking for a mile in repayment.

Don't act like all that Black talk scares you; why are you afraid of yourselves, your Blackness, and glad to kiss behind for Mr. White is right? I don't understand, 'cause that's wrong! We as a people need to come together. Stop trying to cut the rainbow cord that binds us. We need to bind it with dark threads and make it stronger than ever.

That can't be done kissing up to the white man. But it can be done in the African-American Institute, and Minority Student Affairs. It can be done in NBSA, Onyx, BESS, NIA, Peer Counseling, and so on. It will be done with or without you. Don't find yourself locked out of two races. I'll say it one more time for your with hard heads: Black People You Need to Stop and Come Together!!!

• Creative Connections

Continued from page 3.

stream exclusionary practices result in frustrated Black Artist, as depicted by our wandering artist on Leon Street.

How did the B.A.P.W. come to call the institute it's home? Was it by some magnetic force. No, not exactly. Once Upon A Time in a land not too far away McGhee in his pursuit for knowledge arrived at the A.A.I. Library where in the midst of Langston, Brooks, and Hughes he found Johnson, Karen Johnson, that is the A.A.I. assistant librarian. The two realized that they shared a common dream of creating an artistic home base in the Boston community. Johnson yearned to initiate an artistic home for NIA (Northeastern University's Patrons of Black Culture). McGhee yearned for a community artistic home base. Johnson would supply her dedication, talent, students and facilities. McGhee would supply his dedication, talent, directors, actors and playwrights.

The A.A.I. plays a vital role in the B.A.P.W.'s development. Many Black organizations only serve the community which it was designed to directly address. According to



(File Photo)

McGhee these organizations exist in a vacuum and he is pleased that the A.A.I. does not practice this principle. There is a duality between B.A.P.W. and the A.A.I. and students provide this duality. Students from educational institutions such as Massachusetts College of Art, Roxbury Community College, Northeastern University and Harvard University are frequent workshop participants. McGhee hopes that the workshops will be methods of further expanding their personalities so that they may begin to look at themselves and others in the broader light. More Northeastern faculty and students are encouraged to

participate in the weekend workshops.

Playwrighting workshops take place on Saturdays from three to five p.m. Acting workshops take place on Sundays from three to five p.m. The B.A.P.W. works earnestly and efficiently to make it's dreams a reality. November 17th through the 19th the Black Folks Theater Company, B.A.P.W.'s newest artistic division, will present playwright Charles Fuller's (author of *A Soldier's Story*) play *Zooman and the Sign*, directed by playwright and workshop leader Thomas Grimes.

Few people should have any difficulty connecting to the

message of *Zooman and the Sign* because it addresses issues pertinent to communities nationwide, in particular this Boston community. Where does this Boston connection lie? Recall the summer of 1988 when in the midst of a busy summer day eleven-year-old Tiffany Moore lost her life in the crossfire of a drug interaction. Definitely the murderer should be prosecuted, you say? However, this becomes difficult when eyewitnesses refuse to bear witness to the seriousness of this brutal situation.

Zooman and the Sign, although written before the death of Tiffany Moore centers on a very similar incident. To become more familiar with *Zooman and the Sign* attend it's production held at Suffolk University's C. Walsh Theater, Beacon Hill, 35 Temple Street, behind the State House.

Not only will this production enhance you with the talents of Fuller but, also the talents of the B.A.P.W. Actor and workshop member Alan Oliver performs the role of Zooman. Do not hesitate to dial the B.A.P.W. at 424-8849 because it intends to call in our wandering frustrated Black artist so that he in the words of Sean McGhee, "... may show the fruits of our struggle and the sweetness of our success."